

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 CU-04

EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 /079 W

-----112337Z 001914 /67

P R 111830Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1149

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MAZATLAN 0149/1

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX, PINT, CGEN, EGEN

SUBJ: MEXICO'S CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE TOURISM

1. ITEMS ARE APPEARING IN THE LOCAL PRESS ABOUT SINALOAN EFFORTS TO INCREASE TOURISM TO THE AREA. AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN MAZATLAN'S EL DEMOCRATA OF MARCH 10 STATED THAT THE SECRETARY OF TOURISM, GUILLERMO ROSELL DE LA LAMA, WOULD SOON VISIT THE STATE TO ACCELERATE THE TOURIST CAMPAIGN. IN A PRESS INTERVIEW, THE FEDERAL AND STATE TOURISM DELEGATE IN CULIACAN, ENRIQUE FITCH, STATED THAT THE OBNOXIOUS PRESS CAMPAIGN BY AMERICAN JOURNALISTS AGAINST SINALOA, PRINCIPALLY AGAINST CULIACAN, MUST BE STOPPED AND HE IS INVITING THE EDITORS OF THE NEWSPAPERS IN WHICH UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY APPEARED TO VISIT CULIACAN TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES ITS POSITIVE ASPECTS AND HOPEFULLY NULLIFY THE NEGATIVE IMAGE. MR. FITCH FURTHER STATED THAT DESPITE THE FACT THAT AUTHORITIES HAD BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE THAT ASSASSINATED TOURISTS HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN ILLICIT BUSINESS, IT WAS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. HE ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT DENY THAT SOME BONAFIDE TOURISTS HAD BEEN ASSAULTED BUT THAT THEY HAD TRAVELLED AT NIGHT AGAINST THE WARNINGS OF THE SECRETARY OF TOURISM. AN ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BY THE SUB-DIRECTOR GENERAL OF INFORMATION AND TOURIST ASSISTANCE THAT A NEW POSITION, THAT OF CHIEF OF THE GREEN ANGELS, HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AS A PILOT PROJECT IN SINALOA SINCE IT WAS

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CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS FOR TOURISM IN MEXICO, AND SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO THE MOST EFFICIENT SERVICES. HE ADDED THAT THIS WOULD OFFER MORE SUPPORT TO THE CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT THE VIOLENCE AGAINST UNITED STATES TOURISTS IN SINALOA. AN ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN MADE THAT FIVE NEW GREEN ANGEL RADIO PATROL CARS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE FLEET OF FOUR, INCREASING THE TOTAL IN SINALOA TO NINE.

COMMENT: THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF STATEMENTS EMANATING FROM STATE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES WHICH ARE CONTRADICTORY. MANY REPORT CONTINUED VIOLENCE, THUS THE NEED TO INCREASE THE GREEN ANGELS WHILE OTHER STATEMENTS FROM HIGHER OFFICIALS GLOSS OVER THE EXISTENCE OF VIOLENCE AND STATE THAT TRANQUILITY HAS RETURNED TO SINALOA. ONE HIGH STATE OFFICIAL RECENTLY TOLD THE CONSUL THAT HE HAD SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION TO THE GOVERNOR BECAUSE OF HIS FRUSTRATED EFFORTS TO BETTER THE SITUATION FROM LACK OF COOPERATION. HE FURTHER STATED THAT THIS RESIGNATION WAS AT THE INSISTENCE OF HIS WIFE WHO HE SAID LIVED IN CONSTANT FEAR THAT HE WOULD BE KILLED BECAUSE OF HIS OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM OF CORRUPTION IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENTS. THE CONSUL FEELS IT IS WORTHY OF MENTION THAT FEW OF THE ASSAULTED AMERICANS FELL INTO THE SUSPECT CATEGORY OF ILLICIT TRANSACTIONS AND THAT OVER HALF OF THE ASSAULTS OCCURRED IN BROAD DAYLIGHT IN THE FORENOON AND AFTERNOON AND THAT NO WARNING AGAINST NIGHT TRAVEL WAS ISSUED BY GOM AUTHORITIES UNTIL AFTER THE DAMAGE WAS DONE.

2. LOS MOCHIS EL DEBATE, MARCH 4, REPORTED THAT DRASTIC MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST PURVEYORS OF TOURIST SERVICES WHO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PESO-DOLLAR EXCHANGE IN DEALING WITH THEIR CUSTOMERS. A STATEMENT ISSUED BY SALVADOR MACIAS-ARAGON, TOURIST REPRESENTATIVE IN THAT CITY, INDICATED THAT BUSINESSMEN CAUGHT ABUSING TOURISTS WOULD BE HEAVILY FINED AND POSSIBLY HAVE THEIR BUSINESSES CLOSED FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

COMMENT: THE ARTICLE DID NOT SAY HOW THE VICTIMS WOULD BE RECOMPENSED FOR THEIR LOSSES.

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL MAZATLAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1150
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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3. SIMON MALDONADO, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TOURIST DEPARTMENT OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN MAZATLAN, ANNOUNCED THAT THE JEWISH BOYCOTT AGAINST MAZATLAN AND MEXICO HAD ENDED. IN A SIMILAR VEIN, RODOLFO FARBER-LORDA, DIRECTOR OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN MAZATLAN STATED THAT CANACO (CAMARA NACIONAL DE COMERCIO) WAS INTERESTED NOT ONLY IN PROMOTING TOURISM BUT IN ERASING THE NEGATIVE IMAGE OF MEXICO ABROAD, ESPECIALLY OF CULIACAN. HE FURTHER STATED THAT THE GOVERNOR IS WORKING WITH CANACO IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE BETTER SECURITY TO THE TOURISTS.

4. A CARTOON WHICH RECENTLY APPEARED IN LOS MOCHIS EL DEBATE OUTLINES A MAP OF MEXICO AND THE CAPTION OVER THE MAP IS "VIOLENCIA". ON THE MAP FROM NORTH TO SOUTH ARE CANNISTERS OF TNT WITH OUTHANGING FUSES. EACH CANNISTER BEARS THE NAME OF A STATE: SONORA, CHIHUAHUA, SINALOA, SAN LUIS POTOSI, JALISCO, OAXACA AND YUCATAN. THE FUSE ON THE CANNISTER AT OAXACA IS AFLAME, AND CAPTION UNDER THE MAP READS "ALERTA*". BENEATH THAT IS THE CAPTION: "THE FUSE HAS BEEN LIT".

COMMENT: THE GOVERNOR'S SITUATION IN SINALOA IS BECOMING PRECARIOUS. HE IS AT ODDS WITH THE STRONG PRESIDENT OF CAADES (CONFEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES DE AGRICULTORES DEL ESTADO DE SINALOA), LIC. LAURO DIAZ-CASTRO, AND OTHER GROUPS OF SMALL LAND OWNERS. IT IS RELIABLY REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT LOPEZ-
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PORTILLO IS UNHAPPY WITH THE GOVERNOR'S HANDLING OF THE LAND INVASIONS WHICH ARE CONTINUING UNABATED. THE LOCAL PRESS HAS ALSO TAKEN UP THE CUDGEL AGAINST THE GOVERNOR IN HIS SUPPORT OF THE LAND INVASIONS AND FEEL THAT HE IS WORKING AGAINST THE TRANQUILITY OF SINALOA WHILE MANIFESTING THAT HE IS SUPPORTING IT.
MATTHEWS

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